

Here is a list of ideas to promote literacy during February, I Love to Read Month, and throughout the rest of the year!

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## **CAPTURE THE SPIRIT OF THE OLYMPICS—READ!**

Read about the Winter Olympics! Many topics and themes can be explored to develop interdisciplinary units that span all grade levels and areas of interest. Here are some suggested activities to motivate students to read. Note: you will need a large map of the world for a visual aid.

**Teamwork:** many races take teamwork, so your question might be, “How will they do it?” For example, carrying the Olympic torch requires many hundreds of helpers such as: organizers to map the route; coaches to train and encourage the runners; police to control traffic; volunteers to hand out food and water to the runners; reporters and photographers to record the event; and something to make sure runners, organizers, police, mayors, volunteers, and news people are all doing the right thing in the right place at the right time.

**Research the Olympics:** What does “Olympiad” mean? How and where did they begin? What are the dates of the Winter Olympics and when will they be held in the future? What is the newest sport to be added to the Winter Olympic competition? What are the Olympic symbol, motto, and flame? Compare the games and sports in the Winter Olympics and the Summer Olympics. Report the findings in many varied and unusual ways.

**Research the country:** Research the country where the Olympics are being held as well as other participating countries. Learn about their land formations, climate, cities and towns, and how they adapt to their environments, and about their culture and customs. How does the host city prepare for the Olympics?

**Greece:** Greece is also the home of many famous myths, which describe heroes of the gods. What role do they have in modern literature and folklore?

**News coverage:** The Olympics generate a lot of news coverage. Encourage students to bring in newspaper and magazine articles on the Olympics. They could be used to develop bulletin boards and a variety of activities. In editorials and columns, students should determine if the opinions and positions taken are supported by facts.

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## **READ ALOUD!**

Read aloud to the class everyday—no matter how old the students are! Read students brief but complete stories as often as possible. Provide variety such as high interest, humor, special interest, and family stories. Be a model. Let students see you read.

## **FOOD FEST:**

Plan a “food fest” for the classroom. Each student shares a poem that uses food as a theme.

## **READ-ALONG:**

Celebrate with song by holding a read-along, sing-along. Use an overhead projector to project the words of old favorites and new songs. Students can assist in the preparation by illustrating the transparencies.

### **KIDS' ROOM LIBRARY:**

Develop a "Kid's Room Library"—made, run, and maintained by students.

### **WINNIE THE POOH'S ANNIVERSARY:**

Celebrate Winnie the Pooh's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2002!

### **DR. SEUSS IDEAS:**

Go to <http://www.nea.org/readacross/> for some great ideas on how to celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday!

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### **FEBRUARY DATES TO REMEMBER AND EXPLORE:**

- **AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH**—Call (202)-628-1776 for a schedule of events; ask for the Historian General's Office.
  - **AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH**—For a celebration of African-American history as featured in picture books and nonfiction selections, from pre-Colonial time to the present. See the Feb. 1996 issue of Teaching preK-8, "For Black History Month: A Timeline of Books," pp 46-48.
  - **AFRICAN AMERICAN READ-IN CHAIN**—<http://www.reading.org>
  - **GROUNDHOG DAY**—February 2<sup>nd</sup>!
  - **ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST PUBLIC SCHOOL IN AMERICA**—The Boston Latin School opened on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1635.
  - **VALENTINE'S DAY**—February 14<sup>th</sup>! Have students pen their own Valentines cards, or research some of the ancient Greek/Roman mythology behind the holiday.
  - **NATIONAL PTA FOUNDER'S DAY**—February 17<sup>th</sup>!
  - **PRESIDENT'S DAY**—February 18<sup>th</sup>!
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### **FAMOUS AUTHORS' FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS:**

- Charles Dickens, February 7<sup>th</sup>
- Laura Ingalls Wilder, February 7<sup>th</sup>
- Alice Walker, February 9<sup>th</sup>
- Erma Bombeck, February 21<sup>st</sup>